

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-34 were pending in the above-identified patent application.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract in connection with its language and format.

Claims 1-9, 17, and 22-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Redmond et al. U.S. patent 5,015,197 (hereinafter "Redmond").

Claims 10-16, 18-21, and 26-30 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Claims 31-34 were indicated to be allowable.

Applicants' Reply

A Petition for a two-month extension of time to respond to the Office Action is being filed concurrently herewith.

Applicants have amended the specification to correct minor and inadvertent typographical errors. Applicants have amended the Abstract to remove or change any language that may be objectionable to the Examiner (*see* Office Action, page 2, lines 5-18).

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9, 17, and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Redmond. Applicants respectfully disagree with the contentions made by the Examiner in the Office Action in connection with this rejection. However, to facilitate allowance, applicants have canceled claims 1-30 without prejudice, and have rewritten in independent form the claims that the Examiner objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Nothing in this response should be interpreted as applicants' acquiescence to, or agreement with, the Examiner's rejection under § 102.

Applicants have added the rewritten claims as new claims 35-168. New independent claims 35, 64, 90, 114, 136, and 154 correspond to originally filed dependent claims 10, 13, 18, 20, 26, and 29, respectively, rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Each new independent claim also has applicable dependent claims found in the originally filed claims.

Accordingly, the Examiner's objection to claims 10-16, 18-21, and 26-30 as being dependent upon rejected base claims should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 31-168 are patentable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance are accordingly respectfully requested.

Authorization


The Director is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this Reply, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Director is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby

authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

Respectfully submitted,
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